



LEELA'S DREAMS

A FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN



LEELA AND THE FLOWER DEVIS.

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BY MARIE MUSAEUS-HIGGINS

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FOREWORD

Education Office,
Colombo, 14th July, 1925.

Dear Mrs. Musaeus-Higgins,

I have read your little book with great interest. The charm of the dream story is a never failing attraction with children, and I feel sure that the story of "Leela's Dreams" will find a ready place among the readers in our English Schools.

The book shows sympathetic understanding of the child mind—a feature which is too often lacking in our school readers.

I offer no criticisms of your effort, nor need I enlarge on its merits as I am sure the book will find its own place in the hearts of the children of Ceylon. The only suggestion I would offer is that it might some day be translated into the Vernacular where books of this kind are badly needed.

The proof copy is returned herewith.

Yours sincerely,

L. MACRAE,
Director of Education.

LEELA'S DREAMS

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INTRODUCTION.



HERE lived some time ago, in Ceylon, in a little house which was surrounded by a small but beautiful garden, a widow who had two dear little daughters. Mrs. Leonard was an English lady whose husband had held a Government position in Ceylon. When Mr. Leonard died his wife did not wish to leave the Island because she loved the East and its people. She loved their customs too and she had given Eastern names to her daughters, and dressed them in the graceful Eastern saris. Her elder daughter, Somawattie, was eight years old. She was a very active girl, who helped her mother diligently, tidying up the rooms and setting the table for their meals and doing all kinds of useful things. She went to an English School and when she came back in the afternoon she tried to teach her little sister, who was five years old, what she had learned. Little Leela was not very eager to learn, but she loved to be in the garden playing with the flowers and even with the leaves which had fallen from the bushes and trees. She talked to them as if they were her companions and it was very nice to see how careful she was with them. She very seldom plucked any flowers; only when they looked limp and thirsty she plucked them and put them into a vase with water. Thus Leela became so fond of *her* flowers, as she called them, that when she went to sleep she used to dream of them as if they were little people and that she herself was as small as they. These dreams were so real to her that sometimes she thought she lived in Fairyland and that she talked with the flowers and animals. Often when Leela awoke she told her mother about her dreams, and the kind mother used to listen and smile and call

her "my little dreamer." But the elder sister Somawattie laughed and teased Leela and called her "stories" nonsense, so the little girl ceased to tell her sister of her dreams.

The two elder sons of Mrs. Leonard went to a College in Colombo, and sometimes they went up-country during the holidays. There was also a little brother in the family who loved Leela best of all, and sometimes he romped about with her in her dreams.


Now I will tell you some of Leela's dreams which she told me, and I hope you, my children, will like them just as much as I liked them when she confided them to me.



DREAM ONE

The Little Flower Fairies.

CHAPTER ONE.

LEELA! come with me into the garden to pluck some flowers for mother! to-morrow will be her birthday!" called out Somawattie one afternoon. She took Leela by the hand and out they ran into the garden.—"Just look how beautiful this Clematis is! how daintily the white clusters hang!" said Somawattie, "they will make a nice bouquet together with some pink roses for dear mother. We will gather some of these white lilies too, they have such a sweet scent!" Somawattie plucked a lot of flowers and little Leela said quite sadly, "If you take all, how can I find any for dear mummie?"

"Here, take this Aralia flower which has just fallen from the tree! and there lies a golden Alamandar flower! both will remain quite fresh if you put them in water," said Somawattie, and ran into the house with her flowers. Little Leela ran after her holding her two precious flowers daintily in her small hands. She took a little chattie from the shelf in the nursery, filled it with water and put the two flowers into it. Then she got on a chair and placed the chattie behind a box on the shelf so that dear mummie should not see the flowers when she came to say Good-night to her little daughter, because the flowers were meant for her mother's birthday. Leela played very happily with her small brother till supper-time, but she did not tell him about the two flowers; he was too young to understand, she thought. After supper she went to bed very sleepy after a happy day's play. The little brother, who was sleeping in the same room, was soon sound asleep. Leela's eyes too were closed, and it was quite still in the room when she heard a very tiny voice coming from the shelf where the chattie with the flowers stood. The voice said, "Do you want to sleep, Aralia? I am not at all sleepy; come, let us go to the dear little girl in the bed over there who takes such good

care of us." "But how *can* we go?" asked Aralia, "we cannot fly!" "Oh! just look!" said the Alamandar flower, "I can fly, and so can you if you try." The Alamandar flower shook herself and two of her petals turned into two yellow wings, and the other part of the flower became a sweet little flower-fairy with a yellow silk sari. Quickly the Aralia did the same and lo! she also had two golden wings and wore a white silk dress. "How sweet you look!" said Alamandar, "come, let us fly to little Leela." They flew over to her and sat down on Leela's two little fat hands and looked at her. "Open your eyes, little Lily," said Aralia; "We should like to see them, they are like blue stars." Leela opened her eyes and said, "Who are you, pretty little people?"

"Well, well!" laughed Alamandar, "do you not know us? We are your two flowers which you have put so carefully into the water for your mother's birthday." "But you have wings and look so very, very pretty," said Leela rubbing her eyes to see better. "Where did you get your wings?"

"Oh! that is *our* secret," laughed the flowers, "would you like to have wings and come with us into the moonlight?"

"Oh! yes! if I could!" answered Leela wonderingly.

"Just close your eyes for a moment, little friend," said the Flower-Devis, "and we will make you some wings too."

Leela closed her eyes very obediently and the two little devis pulled her night-dress out at the shoulders and flew round her in a circle singing a very sweet song. Then they called out, "Now, Lily, open your eyes!" When the little girl opened her eyes she saw that she had two dear little wings all white and shining, and her night-dress had changed into a sari of shimmering, silvery material, and to her great astonishment she was just as small as her two flower companions. She clapped her tiny hands in delight and called out, "Now I can fly with you into the moonlight! come, come!"

CHAPTER TWO.

LEELA with the help of her companions opened the nursery window and the flower-devis flew out into the moonlight taking Leela between them. They wanted to fly to the little island in the lake, where it was so very beautiful, and where they could dance in the moonlight with the other Flower-Devis. But when they had gone about half the distance they saw a big bird flying just above their heads, looking, down at them with greedy, shining eyes. "Oh! the owl, the owl!" cried Leela, "it wants to eat us! quick, quick! let us slip into this dear old hollow goroka tree." They had hardly reached the tree and slipped into the hole when the owl swooped down. Luckily the hole in the tree was too small and she could not get in. So she sat down on the branch of a tree close at hand, darting angry looks out of her yellow eyes at Leela and her companions. They were trembling with fright, but as they saw that the owl could not get into the tree they grew calm and quiet, and Aralia said, "I am so sorry we cannot get to the island as long as that horrid owl is there; we must wait here till she flies away." "Who is talking there?" asked a pleasant little voice from the depths of the hollow.

"Three little wanderers taking shelter here," answered Leela, "we were followed by an owl that wanted to eat us up; please let us remain here till the owl flies away." "That is Leela's voice," said the squirrel who lived in the goroka tree with her family. "Little Leela, I am Bushy-Tail, the squirrel whom you have fed so often, and I am very glad that you have come to pay me a visit. But it is dark in my house, and we must see each other." Bushy-Tail then called out, "Wake up, wake up, fire-flies! and make some light for us, for our friend Leela has come to pay us a visit!"

At once seven little fire-flies came from the corner of the tree hollow and flew round Leela and then sat down in front of her.

She then saw that she and her flower-friends were in a comfortable little room with a soft bed of moss in one corner on which slept three little squirrels, while Bushy-Tail, the mother, stood before her waving her tail as a sign of welcome.

"And who are these companions of yours, sister Leela?" asked Bushy-Tail.

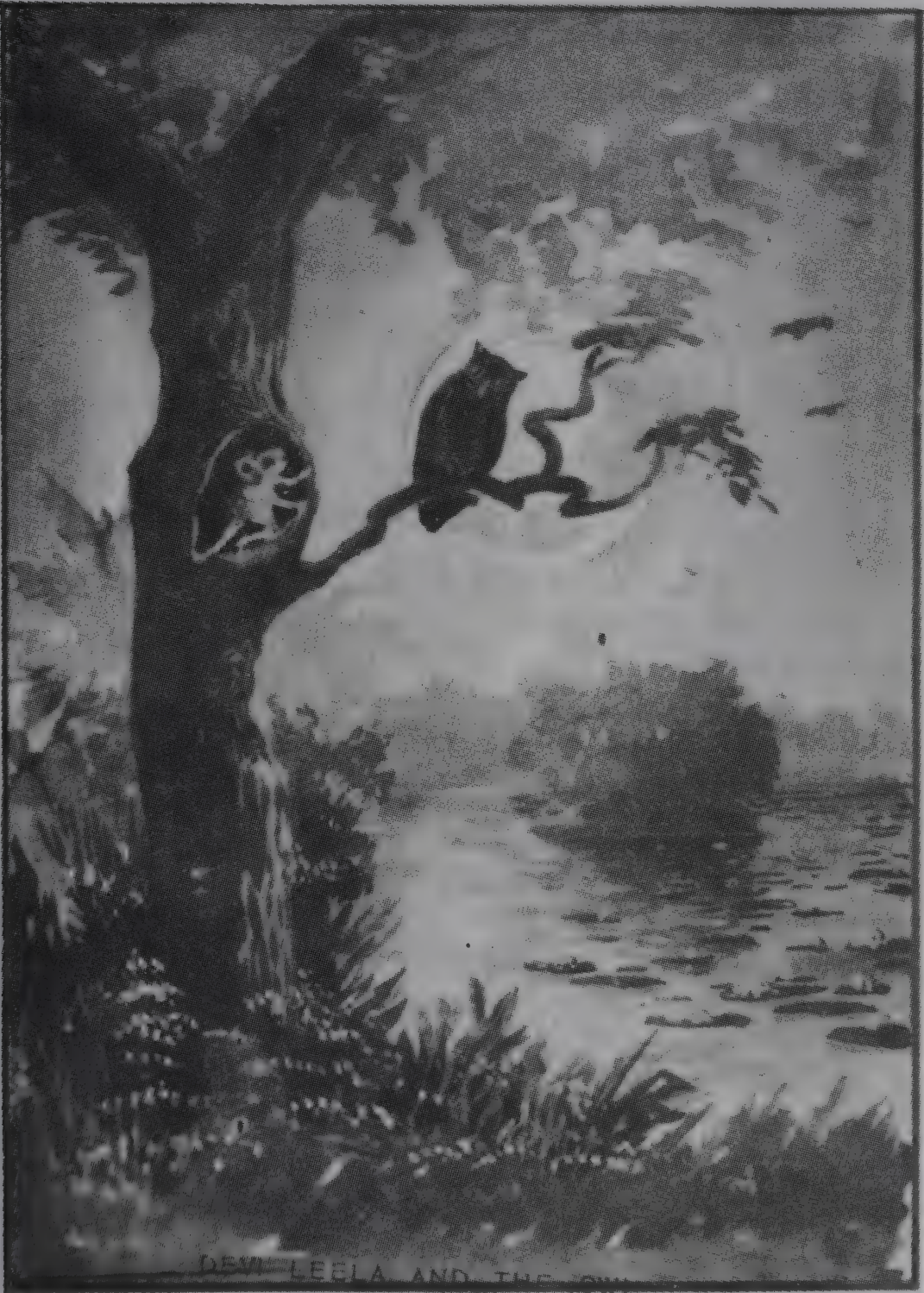
"You see, Bushy-Tail," answered Leela, "they are my two dear friends, Aralia and Alamandar. I found them in my garden, and I put them into water. When I went to sleep they got wings and lovely clothes, and they made some wings for me also, and we wanted to play in the moonlight near the lake."

"But now," said Bushy-Tail, "you must remain here and make yourselves comfortable. If you go out now, the owl might eat you. I will make some coffee for all of us. Leela, will you come with me into the kitchen?"

Leela followed Bushy-Tail and she saw there a small fireplace and a little kettle made of a ground-nut shell hanging over the fire. On the kitchen table, which was made of moss, stood dear little cups and saucers also made of ground-nut shells. Bushy-Tail poured some water from a big nut-shell into the kettle. Biting a ground-nut into small pieces she put these into the kettle; then with her bushy tail she fanned a spark of fire into a blaze and when the kettle boiled she called to her children, "Bring the table for our guests, little ones."

Quickly the three young squirrels brought a cushion made of moss, put it into the middle of the room and asked the seven fire-flies to take their seats in the middle of the table to act as lamps. Then the little squirrels brought the cups from the kitchen and set the table. Mother Bushy-Tail brought the ground-nut coffee, which smelt delicious; and all sat down round the table on little moss cushions. Instead of bread they had slices of ground-nuts toasted. How they enjoyed this simple meal!

"Only the owl is hungry now," said Leela; "I will take her some coffee and toast; perhaps she will be kind to us after that!"



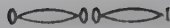
DEVI LEELA AND THE OWL.

DEVI LEELA AND THE OWL.

Leela went to the opening of the hollow, where she saw the owl still sitting on the branch near them, and said, "Mrs. Owl, you must be hungry. Look ! I have brought you something to eat and drink !"

"I do not like such stuff," snapped the owl. Then in a friendlier tone she said, "But as you are so kind-hearted, little Leela, I will not hurt you or your companions ; I will fly away and hunt for some rats instead. Good-bye, good little girl !"

And the owl flew off.



CHAPTER THREE.

"I THINK we ought to go home now," said little Leela; "mother may be frightened if I do not come home soon."

"First let us have a dance," said mother Bushy-Tail; "the fire-flies will furnish the illuminations and I will beat time with my tail." So they began dancing round the moss table, and they were very merry.

When they were tired of dancing and had rested awhile Bushy-Tail said:

"Now, my little friends, it is time to go home, I see the rising sun making the clouds a little bit rosy, and you must be home before he comes up. I hope you will pay us another visit soon."

So the three little flower-devis said "Good-bye" to kind Bushy-Tail and her three children and the seven fire-flies; and hand in hand they flew back to Leela's nursery.

Leela slipped into her bed and the two flowers returned to the chattie on the shelf, and after nodding happily to each other all three fell asleep at once.

When Leela awoke the sun was peeping in brightly at the nursery window. She rubbed her eyes and looked over to her two flowers in the little chattie on the shelf; she nodded to them and whispered:

"If sister Somawattie knew where we three were last night, she would not believe it; but I will not tell her; we had such a splendid time!"

The little girl got up quickly and was soon dressed. Then she took the chattie with the two flowers and put them on her mother's table, near the birthday cake, which had, one big lighted candle in the middle of it. When their mother came in, her two little girls greeted her with happy faces, and Somawattie handing

her the flowers which she had gathered the previous evening recited a nice little birthday poem. Leela said very sweetly, "I wish you a happy birthday, darling mother! The two flowers near your cake are from me."

Mrs. Leonard kissed her little darlings, and admired the flowers. After Somawattie had gone to school, Leela danced round the birthday table as she had done, the night before, round the moss table in the hollow of the goroka tree with her flower-devi companions and the little squirrels.*

"I want to tell you something that happened last night, mummie," said Leela, "but you must not tell Somawattie." The little girl's face was shining with happiness and the mother nodded to her, ready to listen to her little daughter's story of the flower-fairies.

In the evening of the same day Leela's two flowers hung their heads and looked withered. "What is the matter with my flowers?" asked Leela.

"Oh you little stupid!" said her sister, "they are dead and of no use any more," and she threw them out of the window. Leela's eyes filled with tears. She ran outside at once, picked up the two flowers and put them back into her little chattie. She could not go to sleep that night, but when at last she had cried herself to sleep she dreamt that the two flowers came over to her, again in their flower-devi shapes. They looked rather tired, but they said to Leela, "Do not be sad, little sister! you see it is only our dresses that are faded; we are going up to a star which is more beautiful than this Earth. So do not grieve for us!" When Leela looked at the flowers next morning she found them quite withered. But instead of crying she just said to herself, "Perhaps they have gone to the star now and are very happy; and I hope when I die I shall find them there and we shall fly about together again."

* I am sorry to say the goroka tree has fallen down since then and mother Bushy-Tail and her family have had to find another home

DREAM TWO

Princess Daisy's Wedding.

CHAPTER ONE.



“OTHER dear,” said Somawattie one Saturday afternoon, “I have finished my lessons; may I go with Leela to the hill near the brook?”

“What do you want to do there, dearie?” asked her mother.

“You see, mother darling” answered Somawattie, “the weather is so lovely just now, and I know there are some pretty white daisies there, and also arum lilies, and I want to make a nice bouquet for the drawing-room for to-morrow; and Leela would also like to go, would you not, Leela?”

“Yes, please Mummie, let us go!” said Leela, very pleadingly.

“Very well then, Children, but you must be back for tiffin.”

“Oh! Mother dear, please let us take some bread and plantains with us; we should so like to eat our tiffin in the open air, just under the big eucalyptus-tree—there are very nice stone seats there!”

“Well then, run away, my little ones,” said the mother, after putting some bread and plantains into Somawattie’s basket; “but do not stay too late!”

“Thank you, mother dear!” cried both the children, and off they ran very happily.

The weather was very fine and as they were at that time up-country for a change they did not feel hot at all, even when they were running quite fast. After a few minutes they came to the foot of the hill. Little tea-bushes grew all around, and the rubber-trees gave a pleasant shade.

“Now dear,” said the elder girl, “we will first eat our tiffin, so as to have our basket empty, ready for our flowers.”

Somawattie helped her little sister up the hill, and they sat down on a big stone under the eucalyptus-tree, and ate with a good appetite.

"Just look! how nice!" cried Leelawattie; "mummy has put some jaggery in, too! how kind of her! Thank you mummy!" And she quickly broke off a big piece which soon disappeared in her rosy little mouth.

After they had finished, Somawattie ran off with the basket, telling her little sister not to go far away and promising that she would be back very soon.

Leelawattie got down from her stone seat and looked around her. She saw daisies, Arum lilies, and bluebells all round her and she stooped down to pluck them. But when she looked at one especially fine daisy with its golden head and pure white petals she heard a sound like tiny bells ringing.

"Why do the bells ring?" asked Leela. "Do you not know, Leela, that it is my wedding-day to-day?" said a small voice. "The bluebells are ringing to invite all flowers to my wedding, and they ask you also. Please come!"

"How can I?" asked Leela, "I am made too big."

"Oh! just wait a moment! we will see to that," said Princess Daisy, who stood beside Leela wearing a white silk dress with a long train, and with her golden hair and happy, smiling face, looked very lovely and dainty.

Then a beautiful butterfly fluttered down beside Leela. His wings were gold and black and he carried a crown of tiny gold and silver daisies and a small gold staff. After he had bowed very politely to Leela, Daisy said, "This is my bridegroom, Prince Butterfly; he will make you small so that you can come to our wedding-feast."

Prince Butterfly raised his golden staff and touched Leela with it, and when she looked down at herself she was just as small and dainty as Princess Daisy. Then the butterfly changed himself into a dignified fairy prince, dressed in yellow and black velvet and with a Golden Crown resting on his head. He knelt

down before Princess Daisy and put on her head the daisy crown which glittered with dew-drops like diamonds.

“Bring me my veil now, daisy-maids !” cried the little Princess, “and you, friend Lily, must be my bridesmaid.” Leela nodded her head, and then she saw four little daisy-maids in white dresses, their heads covered with golden curls, carrying very carefully a white veil made of the finest cobweb.

“Throw my veil over me, bridesmaid,” said Princess Daisy, “and let us go to the wedding feast; there comes our best man and your partner, my bridesmaid.”

Leela looked up and saw a magnificent butterfly fluttering towards the party; he stood before her, made a deep bow, then shaking himself, lo! there stood a stately Deva in a reddish purple suit of satin, with a long feather of the same colour in his cap. How grand he looked ! He took Leela's hand and whispered, “Come, let us follow the young couple.”

“Carry my train, bridesmaid ! ” said Princess Daisy. Now from all the flowers came forth lovely little maidens, accompanied by butterfly boys as their partners; and a long procession was formed as they all walked behind the Bride and Bridegroom.

CHAPTER TWO.

THE bridal procession came to a little temple all made of moss and leaves. Standing in the temple was the priest—a caterpillar; he was dressed in a long black gown with a yellow border, and looked very gloomy. Prince Butterfly asked him to make a nice speech but the priest answered :

“How can I make a happy speech, when all the world is sad ? but if you are determined to marry I advise you to look out for the monsoon rains and build yourselves a house so strong that it cannot be washed away and both of you with it.”

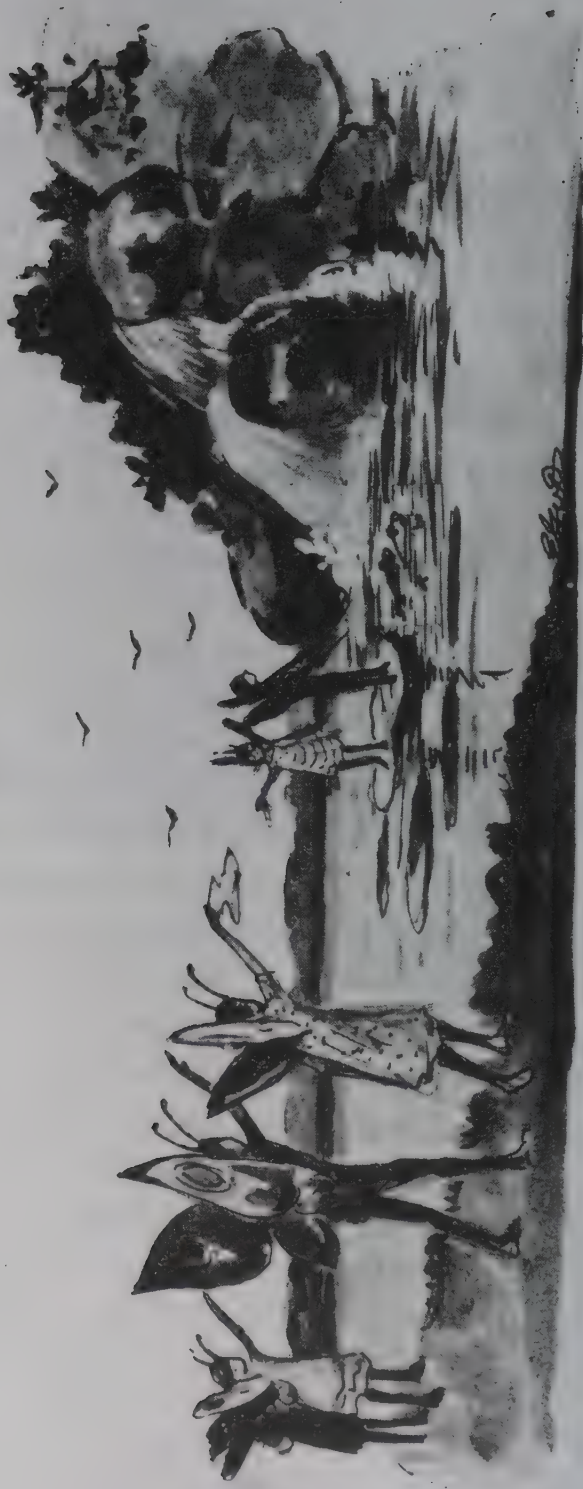
“Thank you for your good advice, Mr. Blackcoat,” answered Prince Butterfly, “but I have a palace ready for my Princess Daisy and I will take good care of her. Now please make a record of our marriage in your books, and if you cannot say any thing more cheerful, then we wish you Good-bye ! We shall have our wedding feast in our palace to which we would like to invite you if you will only look a little more kindly at us.”

Mr. Blackcoat’s face became still longer and he said, “No, thank you, I have more serious work to do than to join you in eating roasted beetles and drinking champagne.”

“But,” answered Prince Butterfly, “we are having only vegetarian food, and honey, and dew-drops—we do not kill beetles.”

“Thank you all the same,” said the gloomy priest, “your merry party would not suit me—go in peace.”

“Then good-bye and good cheer,” said the Bridegroom, “and here is your fee,” and he handed him a dew-drop diamond made by the brownies in their gold and diamond mines in the rocks. Then the whole party walked out of the temple, and drove away in beautiful little carriages made of plaited coconut leaves; each one was drawn by six green jewel-beetles. The bridal couple went first, then came Leela with her partner, the Deva Butterfly who was called the Admiral, and the rest followed in couples.



PRINCESS DAISY'S WEDDING PARTY.

When they reached the waterfall they all got out, and then Leela saw, a little below the waterfall, where the river ran along quietly, several boats waiting. They were made of arum-lily leaves, and two green frogs had taken hold of the stem of each leaf ready to pull them across to the other side.

The Bride and Bridegroom stepped into the first boat and then Princess Daisy called out :

"Come, Lily, there is room for you and your partner in our boat; we are going to our palace on the other side of the river."

"Oh no! please excuse me, dear Princess Daisy, but I cannot come with you, because my mother has forbidden me to go on the water when she is not with me," Leela hastened to reply.

"I am very sorry," answered Princess Daisy, "but of course you must obey. But, dear Leela, you must come some other time, when your mother is with you. Our palace is near the bridge where the wild rose-bush grows; you can see it from where you are standing."

"Good-bye dear Princess Daisy," said Leela "I will come very soon, as soon as Mummie lets me—I wish you a great deal of happiness."

Then the two frogs pulled the little boat away from the shore, and the rest of the party followed them, and as they disappeared they waved their cobweb handkerchiefs to Leela as a farewell.

CHAPTER THREE.

LEELA was very sorry that she could not go with them, but she was an obedient child, and as she turned round to walk back to the hill where she had first seen Princes Daisy she saw that her partner the Admiral had not left her.

"Are you not going to the bridal feast?" she asked him.

"No," he answered, "I must get back to my ship; I came only for the wedding. I am the uncle of Prince Butterfly. We are going to Australia, and my ship of which I am the Admiral is waiting for me in Colombo Harbour."

"How interesting!" said Leela, as they wandered together towards the hill. But Leela's feet were very small and she soon got tired, so the Admiral said:

"I will take you and fly with you up the hill." He shook his shoulders with his four beautiful wings. Leela climbed on his back, held on to his coat, and up flew the Admiral Butterfly.

"You can see on the lake my boat which will take me to my ship," he said to Leela.

She looked down and saw a boat on the lake, a little distance away, but she was so interested that she let go her hold of the Admiral's coat and down she fell with a thump to the ground. It did not hurt her though, and as she opened her eyes she saw that she was sitting on the stone seat under the eucalyptus-tree on the hill. Her head was leaning against the trunk, and a beautiful butterfly, (which was called the Admiral), was sitting on her hand.

Just then Somawattie came running up the hill with her basket full of flowers, and she cried, "Well, little sister! you seem to have had a nice, long sleep. Your eyes are half closed yet."

"I have not been asleep," answered Leela, "I have been at Princess Daisy's wedding."

"Well! well!" laughed Somawattie, "I see you have had a nice dream; but what a beautiful butterfly that is! let me catch it and begin making my butterfly collection."

"Oh no, no, Soma! that is the Admiral, my partner, and I cannot let you touch him."

The little girl bent down lovingly to protect her Admiral and a tiny voice whispered in her ear:

"I will bring you something nice from Australia when I come again to Ceylon—a little tame bear for you to play with."

"Thank you very much, that will be lovely!" answered Leela, dreamily.

The butterfly flew away, and Somawattie gave her little sister a gentle shake, and called out:

"Wake up, wake up, little sister, we must go home to Mummie."

Hand in hand the two sisters ran home; both had had a nice time, the elder one plucking flowers and the little one dreaming, as Somawattie thought, about Princess Daisy's wedding.



The Rose Devi.



HE holidays up-country were ended now, and Mrs. Leonard returned with her children to Colombo, but little Leela did not seem as happy as when she was up-country. She often sat quietly on her little chair in the verandah and thought of Princess Daisy and Prince Butterfly and she longed to go back to the hills and to her playmates, the flowers.

"When shall we go up-country again?" she asked her mother one day. Her sister Somawattie was in school and Leela was very lonely.

"You do not like Colombo, dear, do you?" said her Mother.

"Oh yes, Mummie," answered Leela, "but here the shoe-flowers and lilies are so proud, they will not play with me like the daisies and bluebells, and I cannot find any Alamandar, or Aralia flowers. And Bushy-Tail is not to be found either, since the goroka tree fell down. Besides it is so hot here, and I feel so tired; please let us go back to the hills soon."

"Well, well!" smiled the mother, looking at the little girl rather anxiously for she thought her little daughter looked somewhat pale, "I will write to Auntie and ask her whether you can spend a month with her till Somawattie and I can come up also; would you like that?"

"Yes, dearest Mummie, I like Auntie very much, and I hope she will allow me to run about as I do when you are there; I do want to see my flowers again."

So little Leela went up-country with her faithful Ayah, and her Aunt received her very kindly. The sun was shining brightly the day after her arrival, and Leela asked her Auntie if she might go with her Ayah to the waterfall near the hill.

Then she tripped away so happily, and soon she asked the Ayah to sit down for a little while because she wanted to go alone to the wild rose-bush near the bridge. First, the Ayah would not

agree to this plan, but when the little girl told her that she had been there before, and quite alone, the Ayah sat down on a stone, all the time watching her little charge, and ready to run to her the moment she was needed. The little girl ran to the wild rose-bush near the bridge and said to herself, "Now where is Princess Daisy's palace? I cannot see it anywhere, and yet she told me I should find it near the rose-bush beside the waterfall."

Leela was very much disappointed, and she was nearly crying: Had Daisy told her a story, or was Daisy dead? Oh! she hoped not. She stooped down and was about to pluck a rose when a thorn pricked her hand and she let the rose go. As she looked at it she saw sitting in the middle of it a dear little Devi who looked smilingly at her and said in a silvery voice, "Do not pluck my rose, dear Leela; I am sorry the thorn pricked you, but I could not help it. Princess Daisy sends her love to you. She has gone a little further up the river with her husband. The frogs pulled the arum-lily boat away from this spot because too many people came to pluck the lilies, and her husband was afraid their palace might be injured, as it was in the lily beds. Princess Daisy said that she will be coming back next month, as then the lilies are not in bloom. Good-bye, little friend!"

And when Leela looked again at the rose the little Devi was gone. So she went back to her Ayah and asked her to go for a walk with her. She was quite silent and thoughtful, all the time thinking about Princess Daisy and the rose Devi.

When she returned from her walk she told her Aunt that she had wanted to pluck a rose for her, but that the rose would not be plucked, and its thorn had pricked her hand.




"THERE IS Dr. CRICKET!"

DREAM THREE

Blue Bell.

CHAPTER ONE.

H! there is one of the Bluebells that rang its bell for Princess Daisy's wedding," cried out Leela one afternoon, when she was resting with her Ayah under her favourite eucalyptus-tree. "Just look, Ayah, how lovely it is. I wonder whether it can tell me something about Princess Daisy!"

The little girl stretched herself out on the ground near the Bluebell and soon her bright eyes closed and she was among her flower friends. Let me tell you what she saw and did.

"Why are you crying, dear Bluebell?" asked Leela, seeing two big dew-drops in Bluebell's blue eyes. "Oh! Leela," answered Bluebell (who was now a dear little Devi), "I cannot help crying, because my darling mother is very ill." "But where do you live, Bluebell?" asked Leela. "Do you see that ant-hill? That is our house."

Hand in hand the two little girls (Leela was also very tiny now like her fairy friend) went down the hill and when they came near the little cottage, which was almost hidden among blue flowers, they heard a shrill voice from inside saying, "Here is the prescription, and if you do not get the medicine by this evening, you must die! And now good-bye; I will come again to-morrow morning and then I shall require my fee." "That is Dr. Cricket," said Bluebell, "he is a good doctor."

They saw a little figure with long legs and arms, in a long green coat, hop out of the door, and disappear away among the long grass.

The two little Devis went into the house, where they saw a pale little woman lying in a poor little bed covered with a faded blue cloth. She looked very tired, and said to Bluebell, "My dear little daughter, bring in breakfast, your little brother is very hungry. Afterwards you must go to the drug-store and have the

prescription made up Dr Cricket said I must have the medicine this evening."

Bluebell went to the kitchen and Leela followed her. They brought some bluebell honey, toasted nuts and some tea to the room, spread a clean cloth on the table and put the honey and toast on clean blue saucers. Bluebell poured some tea into the blue cups and handed one to her mother. But the sick mother could only manage to swallow a few sips of tea; she lay back among the faded pillows and closed her eyes.

The children ate heartily and drank some tea; then they cleared the table, took the dishes to the kitchen, washed up and made everything tidy.

Then Bluebell said to her mother, "Mother dear! I will attend to the laundry work at once, and then I will go with Leela to the drug-store to get your medicine. Blue-boy can play here in the room till I come back."

"Certainly, dearie!" said the mother wearily, "I hope he will be a good boy and not shout so noisily. I want to try to sleep a little; give him some rubber-seeds to play with. He likes them very much."

So Leelawattie and Bluebell went outside to the lawn and spread on the grass some white and yellow dresses which had been soaking in a tub of water.

"Are they your dresses, Bluebell?" asked Leela. "Oh no, dear! I only wear blue dresses! These dresses belong to the Arum lilies." "But why do they not wash their own dresses?" "They are very rich and proud," answered Bluebell; "I wash their dresses to earn some money since mother has been ill. You know we are very poor."



THE DRUGGIST CUTS OFF BLUEBELL'S HAIR.

CHAPTER TWO

WHEN they had finished spreading out the clothes, Bluebell took Leela by the hand and then they marched off together quickly to the drug-store which was a long way off.

Both girls were very small and the grass reached up to their shoulders. Now they came to a fallen tree. "How can we get over it?" said Bluebell, "we are so small." "Oh, come on, dear! that is quite easy," said Leela; "I was climbing on it this morning and running along the top of it." But she forgot that she was so much smaller now. She tried in vain to climb it.

So the two little flower girls had to go round the tree and it was a very long way for their small feet. At last they succeeded in getting to the end of the tree-trunk, and then Bluebell said, "See, dear! there is the big mushroom which looks like a red umbrella; it is the toad's drug-store. We shall be there in a moment."

"But what do you want at the mushroom-house? I do not like toads," said Leela, a little frightened.

"The toad is the druggist," answered Bluebell. "He is very ugly but he will not hurt you. I must get the medicine for my sick mother, you know."

So they trudged on, and soon they stood before the red mushroom-umbrella. But they only saw a big green frog sitting under it and the frog said, "Mr. Toad, the druggist, has moved. He lives now near the lake, about a mile off."

The poor little girls were very tired, but they had to walk on and at last they reached the toad's big mushroom-house.

"What do you want, girls?" he said very gruffly. "Why do you come at this time of the day, when I want to have my afternoon sleep?"

"Oh! excuse us, dear Mr. Toad!" said Bluebell; "my mother is so very ill and Dr. Cricket has given a prescription

and he said mother *must* have the medicine before evening." She handed the toad the prescription and after he had put on his spectacles and read it, he said, "This is a very expensive medicine; have you enough money with you to pay for it?" "I have ten ten-cent pieces" answered Bluebell, "that is all the money I have." "Nonsense," answered Mr. Toad, and threw down the prescription. "I want at least three rupees. Go and get them."

"Please! dear Mr. Toad!" pleaded Bluebell, "make the medicine! I will bring you the money to-morrow, when the arum-lilies have paid me for washing their dresses. "I cannot wait till to-morrow for the money," said Mr. Toad; "I will not make the medicine without the money."

Bluebell began to cry and she sobbed, "Oh then my darling mother must die! have pity on me, Mr. Toad!"

"Take my necklace, dear Mr. Toad," said Leela, and pulled off her coral necklace. "That is not good enough for me," growled the old toad. "Take my hair, then!" said Leela, pointing to her golden curls. "Curls are too short for my use," snarled the toad angrily.

"My hair is nice and long" said Bluebell, showing her two black braids, which hung down almost to her knees; "take them and make up the medicine for my mother."

"All right," answered the toad, "I will count them as one rupee each;" and he took a big pair of scissors and clip! clip! clip! he cut off her braids of black hair and put them in a box. Then he looked at the prescription again and said, "I have to gather the herbs to-night by moonlight. Go home and come back to-morrow for the medicine. I must have my afternoon sleep now."

Bluebell and Leela were so astonished at first that they only looked at the toad. Then they both burst into tears and called out, "Why did you not tell us that before you cut off Bluebell's hair?"

"Well, you stupid little girls!" grinned the horrid old toad, "I cannot gather the herbs for it in the daytime, as I told you. Do you want me to make the medicine or not?" "Make it please," said Bluebell, "perhaps it will help mother even to-morrow."

"Well then, go home and come back to-morrow!" sneered the toad.

CHAPTER THREE.

THE two little girls took each other's hands and walked off very sadly. "How can we get home when it is so very far and we are tired? And we did not even get the medicine," sighed Bluebell. "And then that horrid toad cut off your hair," added Leela, shaking her little fist at the druggist. "But look! look!" cried she, "there is a little boat on the lake! I wonder who is the man sitting in it reading? I wish he would take us home in his boat."

"Let us run to the lake and call him; perhaps he will be kinder than the toad," said Bluebell. They ran down to the border of the lake and looked at the boat. "Oh Bluebell, I am so glad," cried Leela; "that is my Admiral and I know he will take us back in his boat to your house. He was my partner at Princess Daisy's wedding and he is very kind."

She called out as loud as she could, "Admiral! Admiral!" but he did not hear. Then a nut was thrown down just at her feet and when she looked up, she saw a squirrel looking at her, moving his tail as a greeting to her.

"Oh! dear Bushy-Tail! How do you do! just throw a nut at my Admiral; he cannot hear my voice calling him," nodded Leela.

The squirrel waved her tail in answer and threw another nut down, and this time it fell just near the boat into the water. The Admiral heard the splash and looked up. He saw the two little girls standing on the bank of the lake, waving their handkerchiefs at him. He quickly took his oars and pulled to the shore. He lifted the little girls into the boat and they told him their story of woe. He smiled and said that the toad was a humbug and that he had made better medicine, which would cure Bluebell's mother very quickly.

"And now tell me, Leela, how is it that you are willing to go on the water with me? You could not go to Princess Daisy's

palace in the arum-lily boat, you remember." "Oh, dear Admiral," answered Leela, smiling sweetly, "mummie said that I might go if you came to fetch me." "That's all right then, my little girl," nodded the Admiral, and rowed them to that side of the lake where Bluebell's cottage stood. He lifted the girls out of the boat and told them to go to the cottage, saying that he would fasten the boat and follow them soon with the medicine and some presents for them.

After a few minutes he came, carrying two baskets. One contained the medicine for Bluebell's mother, and in the other were some beautiful nuts. On the top of the nuts lay a queer little doll which was made of wood and had a very big mouth. "I will explain the usefulness of this little man to you," said the Admiral. "He is a nut-cracker; he can crack all the nuts you want him to crack and twice a day he will crack you a new ten-cent piece."

"Oh, how rich we can be then!" cried Bluebell; "thank you ever so much. Then I can get good food for mother, and she will be well soon."

Now spoke the Admiral: "First give your mother a glassful of the medicine I brought, then please prepare some food for supper, and I will come and take supper with you on the lawn before your cottage. I will in the meanwhile row round to Mr. Blackcoat, the Priest, who married Princess Daisy and Prince Butterfly; I have brought some presents for him from Australia. When I come back I hope you will have supper ready."

Then the Admiral walked away, jumped into the boat and rowed off.

CHAPTER FOUR.

LITTLE Bluebell ran into the cottage to tell her sick mother all about their adventures. The mother eagerly drank the medicine which the Admiral had sent her. "I feel I shall get well now," she said, and smiled for the first time for many days.

The girls went now into the kitchen, boiled some breadfruit and scraped some coconut, which looked beautifully white. Then they made some spinach curry and some coconut pudding. Then they spread a snow-white cloth on the lawn and put the blue plates on it; and when they had just finished that, they saw the Admiral jump out of his boat and walk quickly up to the cottage.

All sat round the table-cloth on the grass and enjoyed a hearty supper, as they all were very hungry. Bluebell took some food to her mother, and she also ate with appetite.

"Now let us have some nuts for dessert," said the Admiral. "Bring Mr. Nut-cracker, who understands the art of cracking nuts to perfection."

The Admiral pressed a button on the feet of the nut-cracker, and the little man opened his mouth wide. Then the Admiral put a nut into his mouth and gave him a sharp knock on his head. Crash! the nut was broken and fell into Leela's lap.

"Now let him crack a very hard nut," laughed the Admiral, when the children stared wonderingly at the little man. He put a big nut into the nut-cracker's mouth. It seemed hard to break. At last the nut was bitten in two and this time a shining ten-cent piece fell into Bluebell's lap.

The children clapped their hands for joy and Bluebell ran to her mother, gave her the shining ten-cent piece and told her of the wonderful thing that had happened.

Now the Admiral took his leave reminding Bluebell that she must let the nut-cracker crack two ten-cent pieces every day for her.

"I will leave my boat here for you," he said, "it might be useful to you; I can fly back myself." Bending down to Leela he whispered "I have brought you something nice from Australia and I will give it to you when your mother comes here next month; now good-bye."

He sat down on the grass and disappeared, but a beautiful butterfly flew up from the spot. It flew towards the far-away sea.

The two little girls looked after the butterfly and said, "I wonder whether he is an admiral, or a butterfly, or both."

Leela was very sleepy now, and she lay down on the grass and soon she was asleep. When she woke up she saw that she had her head on Ayah's lap and she was no longer before the little cottage near the lake. She rubbed her eyes and said to Ayah, "How wonderful! I thought I was at Bluebell's cottage and the Admiral had just flown back to his ship."

"You have been dreaming, little one," said the Ayah, "come, let us go home for supper."

"I have not been asleep," said Leela, "and I have had a nice supper on the lawn before Bluebell's cottage."

But Ayah shook her head. She did not believe in Leela's dreams.



DREAM FOUR

The Star-Flower-Devi.

CHAPTER ONE



FOR a month, little Leela went daily with her Ayah to the big wild-rose bush on the hill near the lotus pond and the bridge.

She sometimes talked to her flowers, but as the Ayah would not let her go away alone and neither would she go away from the little girl, Leela could not enjoy herself quite as much as when her sister Somawattie was with her. She longed for her arrival very much and at last her mother with Somawattie and her small brother came by train. Little Leela greeted them very enthusiastically.

"Mother ! darling !" whispered Leela, after her mother had rested for a little while, "will you go with me to the wild-rose bush near the bridge ? You see Princess Daisy sent me word that she would live there again after the arum-lilies had stopped blooming and there would not be so many visitors to disturb her ; I am so anxious to see her again." "Little one, I will go there with you to-morrow ; I really am too tired just now after the long railway journey ; just run about with Somawattie to-day ; Ayah can take care of your little brother."

So Somawattie and Leela ran off together. The elder sister was specially kind to the little one. She too was glad to be away from hot Colombo and from school lessons.

Hand in hand both sisters visited their old favourite places and at last Leela said :—"Now, Soma, I am a little tired ; just let me rest a while under our dear big tree. You can run around and call me when you are ready to go back to the house."

"All right, little dreamer," said Somawattie. "I know you want to sleep and dream of your flowers. I shall not be very far away."

Leela leaned her head against the good old tree and soon she was in dreamland. Some lovely little white star-flowers grew near her. One of them hung down her head very sadly and then Leela looked at her attentively. She saw a big tear in the eyes of the white-robed Star-Devi of the flower. "Why are you crying, my dear little friend?" said Leela softly.

"Oh dear! How can I help crying when my only sister, who lived in the flower next to me, is lost and I feel so very lonely?" "Why do you not search for her?" asked Leela.

"How can I search for her when I cannot leave this place at all? You see, I have to mind the children of the Tea-flower-Deva. He had to go on a journey on account of some business, in connection with the sale of tea. His Devi has gone away; she went to another star and there is nobody to look after his little ones. Do you hear? One of the babies is crying; I will bring her out and talk to you again."

The Devi disappeared under the tea-bush and came out again with a wee baby dressed in a long white and yellow gown.

"How long has your sister been away?" asked Leela. "Oh! for a whole week—only think how dreadful!" and the poor Star-flower-Devi began crying again, rocking the wee baby to and fro.

"I shall try and find her," said Leela, "do not cry, dear Devi."

"Let us help you to find our dear Auntie," called out four tiny voices, and out rushed four little tea-flower-fairies who had been playing among the tea-bush-flowers.

"But first let us get some honey for breakfast," said the eldest, a sturdy little Deva with blonde curls and bright eyes, dressed in a white and greenish-yellow frock. He climbed up into a Bluebell flower and shook the bell. It began to ring and a drop of sweet honey fell into the tea-leaf cup, which the second little Devi held under it.

"Some more!" cried the smallest Devi, and held open her tiny white sari. "Do not get your sari soiled, dearie," said the Star-flower-Devi; "Auntie is not here to wash it." "Did your sister do that?" asked Leela.

“Yes,” answered the Star-flower-Devi. “She had washed all the babies’ clothes near the brook and when she did not come back, we went down to fetch her. We saw all the clothes spread out neatly on the grass; but sister was not there. Oh! if I only knew where she was.”



CHAPTER TWO

“WHO is stealing my honey?” called out a harsh voice. Leela looked around and saw a tiny old lady standing under the Bluebell flower.

Her dress was blue and bell-shaped, and she wore a small blue cap, also in the form of a bell. She looked very angry and shook her fist at the eldest of the Tea-flower-devas, who very quickly jumped from the Bluebell flower and with his smaller brother and sister disappeared in the bush, the old blue lady running after them.

“Please pardon them, mother Bluebell!” called out the Star-flower-Devi, “I shall see that they ask your permission next time when they want honey.”

“Well! well! I will let them go without punishment this time, as you plead for them,” growled the old Bluebell lady, but they must not do it again.” And she walked back to her flower.

Leela was now ready to go on her errand to find the sister of the Star-flower-Devi, but without the children.

“Cuckoo! Cuckoo!” sounded from the top of the tree. “Bright-eye the Chameleon knows where the Star-flower is. Cuckoo! Cuckoo!”

“Where does Bright-eye live?” inquired the Devi. “I know,” cried Leela. She went to the nearest rock and called out, “Come out, Bright-eye, please come out!”

From under the rock a Chameleon appeared, looking solemnly at Leela and nodding his head. “Please, Bright-eye, tell us where Star-flower’s sister is!”

“What will you give me if I tell you?” asked the Chameleon, solemnly nodding its head again. It looked quite green, as it was standing in the grass.

"What would you like to have?" asked Leela. "A golden crown like the one which the Queen of the Cobras wears," answered the Chameleon, nodding three times.

"I have no crown, but I have a gold piece, which uncle gave me on my last birthday. I will buy a crown for you with it," said Leela.

"All right," nodded the Chameleon. "Come with me into the mountain and we will buy the crown for me from the Brownies, and then I will show where Star-flower's sister is." The Chameleon trotted off and Leela followed him as quickly as her little feet would carry her. (You must not forget that she was very small now, like a flower-devi.)

At last they came to a big rock, which had a very small opening in it.

"Just come close behind me," called out Bright-eye, when he slipped into the opening. "My eyes are bright enough to make light for you."

They were now both in a dark passage, but at the end of it Leela saw a bright light, and when she came nearer, she saw two Brownies with long grey beards and twinkling eyes and dressed in long brown cloaks. They were standing near a big fire melting some metal which looked like gold.

"What do you want, Bright-eye?" said one of the Brownies, "and whom do you bring with you?"

"I want a golden crown for myself, and this is Leela, the friend of all flowers and animals. She has a golden coin and she will pay for my crown."

"Well! well!" said the old Brownie, laughing heartily. "Let us see Leela and find out whether she will really pay for Bright-eye's crown."

Leela had knotted a half-sovereign piece in the corner of her handkerchief. She got it out and the Brownies examined it carefully.

"Yes," they said, "it is a real gold piece. But as you love all things, you also love us, and as you are willing to give your

gold piece for a good purpose (for we know why you want to buy a crown for Bright-eye) we will not take it from you, your mother might scold you. Come with us into our treasury and we will give you a crown for Bright-eye."

The Chameleon wanted to come also, but one of the Brownies said, "You are a bit greedy, and so I cannot let you look at our treasures. Leela is not greedy; she may come in."

The Chameleon looked greatly disappointed; he had to remain outside with one of the Brownies so that he got only a little glimpse into the treasury-chamber.





STAR-FLOWER'S RESCUE.

CHAPTER THREE.

LEELA saw heaps of gold and jewels in the Brownies' treasury-chamber. The walls were glittering with pearl-shells and in the middle, from the vaulted roof, hung a lamp made of a big ruby. She admired that specially. In one corner, on a shelf made of crystal, lay Crowns of all sizes and shapes. Some were covered with diamonds, some were shining with emeralds and some were studded with blue and white sapphires. One, a very small one adorned with a single topaz, was just suitable for Bright-eye's head. This the Brownie handed to Leela, saying to her "Give it to Bright-eye, and he will find you the lost Devi. My best wishes go with you. You are a dear little Devi yourself and everybody loves you."

Leela thanked the Brownie gratefully and both went back into the hall where the other Brownie and Chameleon were waiting for them. Leela put the crown on Bright-eye's head and the delighted Chameleon cried out, "Now I am as handsome as the Cobra Queen herself. Come Leela, we will find the lost Star-flower-Devi now." The Chameleon ran quickly through the passage with Leela, and the shining topaz in his crown made the passage quite bright. When they emerged from the passage the Chameleon said "Just wait a moment; I must put my crown in safety first; I shall be back in a minute."

Bright-eye disappeared in the hole under the rock, where he lived. He returned at once, without the crown, and said, "It is the snake-queen herself who has robbed Starry, the Devi. Come, I will show you where she is. I have to bring fruits to her and her children every day. Take the rose-apples into your apron yourself and we will take them to the palace before she comes back; the queen is bathing in the river now. This is the best time."

The Chameleon led the way and soon they came to the snake hole. Bright-eye looked in and said to Leela, "Just see!

there is Starry standing at the hearth; she is baking cakes for the snakes. She looks so tired and her pretty white sari is quite rumpled and soiled. Quick! give the rose-apples to the four baby snakes, so that they will be busy eating them, and I can take Starry away before the snake-queen comes back from her bath." But one of the little snakes, who had been told by her mother to watch Starry and see that she did not run away, had been coiled up near the hole. She saw Leela and called out, "What do you want here? answer quickly or I shall bite you." "I am bringing you some rose-apples," answered Leela, almost frightened to death; "there are so many that Bright-eye could not carry them all."

"All right! we will have a good feed, then!" cried all the four greedy snakes. "And Leela will tell you some nice stories," added Bright-eye. "I must go home quickly."



CHAPTER FOUR.

THE four little snakes fell upon the rose-apples and began to devour them. Leela was standing near them at the time and she saw, on looking sideways, that Bright-eye had taken Starry in his mouth and was slipping quickly away among the grass. Starry just waved her cobweb handkerchief to Leela. She looked very happy. When the four young cobras had finished the rose-apples, they cried, "Now tell us your story quickly, or we will bite you."

Leela was really so frightened she could not remember a single story at that moment and so she did not say anything. "Hurry up! hurry up! we are getting impatient! Tell us something or we will kill you." "I do not know anything," sobbed Leela. "That is not true! Bright-eye said you knew many stories," yelled all the four snakes and flew at her to bite her! Leela screamed out for help then. She opened her eyes. She was sitting on the same stone as before her dream and her head was leaning against the dear old eucalyptus-tree. The cobras had disappeared, but she heard tiny voices all around her whispering, "Starry is coming, Starry is coming, brought back by Bright-eye! Thank you!, thank you! dear friend Leela, you are our good little Guardian-devi." At the same time the Tea-bush Devi stepped out from under the tea-bush, made a deep ceremonial bow before Leela, and said, "I know all that has happened; the Cuckoo has told me. We will crown you as our Queen in Deva Land; we thank you for all your kindness to us."

"Leela! Leela! where are you, little sister?" called out Somawattie, running up the hill with a basket full of rose-apples. "Oh, I see, my little sister has been asleep and cannot open her eyes yet! Come dearie! we must go home now—otherwise mummie will be anxious about us. Look at all the rose-apples I have for our supper. What a pity you did not help me

to gather them." "I have given mine to the little snakes, and then I wanted to tell them a story and I could not remember any at all," said Leela thoughtfully. "And then Starry came back and they wanted to crown me as a Flower Queen and then you called me. It was very nice except for the snakes "

"You must not dream of snakes, sister dear," said Somawattie, "that is not a good dream." "Oh, they did not bite me after all," laughed Leela; "next time I see them, I shall tell them a story so then they will not do me any harm at all."

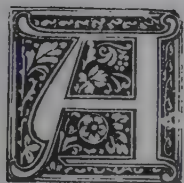
"You are dreaming yet, little sister; come, let us go home."



BRUIN THE BEAR

Bruin the Bear.

CHAPTER ONE.



Few days later there was a great commotion at Rose Cottage, (that was the name of Mrs. Leonard's home up-country) for Mrs. Leonard expected her brother-in-law, who was the captain of one of the great war-ships, and who was often called the Admiral, because he was a great commander and one of the most skilful navigators known.

He was coming from Australia and he intended to remain for a short holiday in Ceylon.

Little Leela was playing with her doll in the garden before Rose Cottage when Somawattie, in a pretty clean sari, came out of the house. "Why are you so beautifully dressed, sister?" asked Leela. "You have even your best pink ribbon in your hair. Are you going out?" Somawattie answered with a wise look on her rosy face, "Oh, little one, do you not know yet that the Admiral is coming? Tell Ayah to dress you nicely also. Of course you do not know uncle Harry! You were too small when he was here last time. But I know him, and I like him very much."

"Yes! I know the Admiral also," called out Leela, "He has promised me something nice from Australia; I will be dressed nicely too."

Leela ran to her mother and said, "Mother darling, I really must put on my best sari, for the Admiral likes me best of all, and when I saw him the other day he promised me a darling little bear from Australia."

"Child! child!" said the mother, quite startled by what her little daughter said, "your dreams are really wonderful," (for the little bear had already been sent to the cottage), "let Ayah dress you quickly, for I think uncle Harry will be here soon."

The whole family collected before the door after a short time, for they heard the hooting of a motor car as it came up the hill. It stopped before the cottage and a tall gentleman jumped out, followed by two boys of about twelve and fourteen years of age.

"Hurrah! hurrah!" they shouted, "we motored up from Colombo with uncle Harry. Good-afternoon, mother and sisters!"

"What fun we will have together," cried Somawattie, when she saw her two big brothers; she had forgotten all about uncle Harry and her best dress.

Mrs. Leonard welcomed her brother-in-law very heartily and looked proudly at her two sons for they were sturdy and handsome lads. The Admiral sat down on the bench and looked at Leela, who was standing aside quietly, watching her uncle curiously.

"Is that my good little niece?" he asked. "How much she has grown! She was a tiny little girl when I saw her last. Come here, little one. Do you know me?"

Leela ran up to her uncle, put her little hands on his knees and looked at him. "Of course I know you, Admiral. Have you brought me the bear that you promised me?" "Well, well, my good little child, you must have dreamed about the bear, for although I have brought one for you, I do not remember that I promised you one. You seem to be a very clever little girl. Now come and let us find the little bear. Where is it, sister?"

Mrs. Leonard took her family to the stable and opened the door, and there sat in the corner a dear little brown bear, rather sad, because he felt lonely. He sat up on his hind legs as soon as he saw the Admiral and made a funny little noise as if he were very happy to see him. "Come, here Bruin," called uncle Harry, "and make the acquaintance of your little Mistress."

Bruin obeyed and let Leela fondle his head, which he seemed to like very much. "He is quite tame," said uncle Harry, "and he will follow you everywhere. You must not be afraid of him. Feed him with rice and sugar; that will keep him very tame. Do not give him any meat."

CHAPTER TWO.

BRUIN accompanied the children the following day on their walk. They were very proud of their new pet and the little brown bear was so tame that he followed them like a dog. "Let us see whether he will come with us to the hill with the big eucalyptus-tree," said Leela. "Come, Bruin!"

He came at once and trotted along at the side of his new mistress. But suddenly he got on his hind legs and sniffed at George's pocket. "What do you want, Bruin?" called out the boy. Uncle Harry was not far away. He heard and saw what Bruin was doing and he explained that he sometimes put a piece of sugar or cake in his pocket and let Bruin find it.

George blushed, for he was very fond of cake, and he had put a piece of cake from the tea-table in his pocket to eat at his leisure outdoors. George gave it to Bruin and the little brown bear sat on his hind legs to eat it, very contentedly.

Now the whole party went to the rail-road crossing near the foot of the hill. There stood the guard's small cottage, with the door wide open. This was a new sight for Bruin, who wanted to find out whether there might be something nice to eat inside. He walked quietly in, without the children noticing it. At once they heard a child screaming in a terrified way in a room of the guard's house.

They all ran quickly to the door and there they saw a very comical sight.

A little Sinhalese girl was sitting on a mat on the ground with a nice brown *roti* in her hand and a mug of milk near her. Bruin took the *roti* gently out of the child's hands, put it on the mat, put his nose into the mug and lapped up the milk very contentedly. No wonder the child screamed, for she had never seen such an animal in all her life.

George called Bruin who, quickly finishing the milk and taking the *roti* in his mouth, trotted along quickly as if nothing

had happened. George went back to the guard's house and promised the crying child some milk and a big piece of cake from home. He told the little girl's mother, who had come in, that the little bear was quite tame and that she must not be afraid. "But he is a bad animal! he stole my child's food," answered the mother rather angrily. "He must not come back here again, or I shall beat him almost to death."

"We will lead him on a chain next time we take him out," said George, "and I will go home at once and get the cake and milk for your child. Please forgive our naughty little pet this time."

The children romped about and played with the little bear and were very happy. Suddenly Leela's brother John threw his cap down over a little squirrel which had watched the children with its clever eyes and enjoyed their play.

"I caught it, I caught it!" called out the boy. "What did you catch?" asked little Leela. "A pretty little squirrel," shouted John. "I will take it to Colombo with me, and make it quite tame."

"Let me see it," said Leela. "Oh brother, that is Bushy-Tail's child and my little friend; you must not keep it, you must let it go. Please, please." "I shall ask uncle about it," answered the boy and ran off, holding the squirrel in his cap.

When the children came home, John brought a wooden cage and put Bushy-Tail in it and closed the door. "Uncle said we could keep it and take it with us to Colombo. You girls have Bruin and we boys want the squirrel, which I caught myself. We will treat it very nicely and put a little silver chain on one foot, so that it can hop about a bit, but not run away."

"Poor little Bushy-Tail," sobbed Leela, "I feel so sorry for you."

CHAPTER THREE.

THE boys put a piece of bread in the cage with the squirrel and a saucer full of water and took it into Leela's bedroom, because they thought it safest there.

When Leela went to bed and the Ayah had left her, she got up again and went over to little Bushy-Tail. She expected to find the squirrel very sad. But he was eating his piece of bread. He looked at her with his clear eyes and said, "Do not be sad, dear friend, I shall not go to Colombo and have a chain on my foot, even if it were a gold chain. Who sleeps here with you?" "Only Ayah, and she goes to bed quite late," said Leela. "All right, little friend, do not worry; I shall know how to get free. Only open the window a little bit! Good-night! and many thanks for all your kindness."

Leela slipped back into her bed, and after a little while she heard something gnawing and cracking. Crack! crack! it went, and then she saw little Bushy-Tail making a jump to the ground. He jumped up to Leela's bed and said, "Good-bye, little friend! I shall see you again after your big brothers have left for Colombo without me." He made a graceful bow and shook his tail and with another nimble jump he was on the window-sill and out of the window.

Quickly he ran towards the well-known hill and slipped into a hole in the eucalyptus-tree. Leela was very happy, slept soundly and enjoyed next morning the disappointment of her two brothers when they saw the sticks of the cage gnawed through and the squirrel gone.

"Now we shall go for walks with your Bruin and not ask Leela to come," teased the boys, "because we know that you helped Bushy-Tail to escape." "No, no," cried Leela, "he freed himself and I saw him jumping out of the window. If you want to take Bruin for a walk, you must put a chain on him. Uncle Harry said so. He gave me the chain for him." She

brought a nice little chain and collar with Bruin's name on it, and said gravely, "If you are good boys, I will allow you to take Bruin for a walk once a day. You know I am his mistress, and you have to ask my permission."

"All right, little mistress," laughed the good-natured boys, "please lend us the chain and allow us to take Bruin for a walk once a day."

Leela handed over the chain and very gravely gave her big brothers permission to walk with Bruin.

So Bruin had two walks every day, one in the morning with the big boys and one in the afternoon with Leela and Ayah.

To speak the truth, Bruin liked the morning walk better because there was more running and romping. But he loved his little mistress best, because she always had either a piece of sugar or a piece of cake for him, which he was allowed to eat under the big tree.

He did not do any more mischief and very soon all the folk in the neighbourhood liked Bruin and often he received presents of cake or sugar which he accepted gravely sitting on his hind legs.

Very soon holidays were over and uncle Harry and the two boys left for Colombo. Mrs. Leonard and the two girls did not go back to Colombo for another month as she was afraid that Colombo was too hot for them yet.

DREAM FIVE

The Children's Heaven.

CHAPTER ONE.



RS. Leonard was sitting on a bench in her garden, making a wreath of white flowers. Her two little daughters were playing on the green.

"Will you come to the cemetery with me?" she said when the wreath was finished. "Oh, mother dear, we are playing so nicely here," Somawattie answered. "Let us remain here please." "I want to go with you, mummie," said Leela. "Somie can play by herself just as well; I do love to sit and dream near Dicky's grave."—She took hold of her mother's hand and both walked away together. They walked between the tea-bushes and eucalyptus-trees and came at last to the small cemetery, which was beautifully situated in a small valley like a haven of rest.

There, under a wide-spreading acacia-tree, was the grave of the little brother, who had died about a year ago, when they were up-country.

Mrs. Leonard looked sadly at the little grave and put the wreath on it. She sat down on the low bench which she had made there for her personal use and Leela sat down at her feet on a little wooden foot-stool, leaning against her mother, for she was tired after the play with Somawattie and the rather long walk.

"Mummie dear," said the little girl dreamily, "Why do you cry? You told me that when little children die, they go to heaven and become little angels. I think Dicky is now very happy and is playing with the other little angels. I will pay him a visit now and I will tell you all about it, when I come back." Mrs. Leonard was somewhat frightened, and she looked anxiously at her little pet; but Leela's eyes were closed and she had one of her sweetest smiles on her face.

Evidently she was very happy. Her lips moved and her mother heard her whisper. "Here you are, little brother! How beautiful it is here. Please show me everything."

Mrs. Leonard watched carefully over her sleeping child, who seemed to be in an ecstasy of delight, clapping her hands and laughing her silvery child-like laugh. Then a serious expression flitted over her face and she nodded her head as if in answer to a request made to her. For about half-an-hour lasted the deep slumber of the child; then she woke up and rubbed her eyes.

She looked at her mother thoughtfully and putting her hands round her neck she whispered:

"Mummie darling, I will tell you all that I have seen and heard when I was in the Children's Heaven! Oh, it is so beautiful there!"—"Yes dearie, I shall want to know all about Dicky. So let us go home now. You must have your milk and pudding and after that I will listen to your story about the Children's Heaven."

CHAPTER TWO.

WHEN Leela was lying in her little bed that evening with wide-open eyes, her mother sat down at the side of her bed and the little girl told her what she had seen in her dream.

"Mummie," said the little girl, "the first thing I must tell you, and it is just the same as you have told me, is that Dicky is not dead at all. He is living in a beautiful place, just like a big garden, and there are many little boys and girls with him. There are many little white beds standing in rose bowers, and when the little ones are tired with play, they just lie down there and sleep; they have lovely dreams. For you know, mummy, there is no real night and day, like ours there. It is always light there; even when the moon shines, it is not cold at all; it is always beautiful weather. Most of the children wear white shining dresses and they look so happy. They laugh so sweetly and they play so nicely with each other and they do not quarrel at all."

"But, mummie dear," continued the little girl, getting quite serious, "I saw a few children whose dresses were quite wet, and they looked so sad. I asked Dicky why they had not shining dresses like the other children, and why they looked sad, because I thought every one must be happy in Heaven. Do you know what Dicky answered? (He is much bigger now than when he went away from earth and he is very clever too). He said, "The mothers of those children with wet dresses are crying such a lot, because they think that their children have left them alone, that their dresses cannot get dry at all, but remain wet with their mothers' tears. I am sure, if the mothers knew how sad their children are, they would not cry so bitterly. Dicky told me to tell you this, mummie, especially, because he says you also cry sometimes, and then his dress gets wet too. So, mummie dear! please do not cry any more."

"It is so beautiful there, where Dicky lives, that at first I thought I should like to remain there also; but I was afraid my darling mummie would cry, and then my dress would be all wet and I could not be happy in Heaven. And a beautiful lady in a white shining dress came, bent down to me and said, "Little Leela, you must remain on earth for a long while yet, because your dear mother would grieve too much if you did not go back to her; so tell your mother all about Dicky and the other children."

"I promised the beautiful lady that I would go back to earth and remain with my darling mummie for a long time. Then the shining lady took us by the hand and showed us all the beautiful trees and flowers and the shining fruits, and the waterfalls and the lakes, and would you believe it? there were some of my flower-Devis there with whom I visited the Goraka-tree. Do you remember, mummie? It is not a long time ago, and I was so sorry when the flowers faded, but I know now that they are not dead at all."

"Oh! mummie dear, how beautiful it is in Heaven! you can hardly believe it. And oh mummie! how pretty the moon looked, so very much brighter than here, and what beautiful glittering forms it made on the lake and how the waterfalls sparkled in all the rainbow colours! I saw some other people too whose dresses were so bright that they almost blinded my eyes. I can only remember that Dicky could look at them with his bright eyes quite easily, but I could not, and I had to close my eyes. Then mummie dear, when I opened my eyes again, I was sitting on the little stool at your feet, and you were looking at me with very serious eyes and there were some tears in them. So I had to comfort you and make the tears disappear, for I thought at once about what Dicky told me."

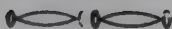
"Thank you, my little darling for telling me all about your wonderful dream; I will think of what Dicky said, and I will not cry any more for I am sure now that he is happy with the other children. I will also tell Margaret's mother not to cry, so that her little one's dress will get dry and shine like Dicky's."

“ Oh, how nice, mummie ! I am sure little Margaret will be happy too, I remember now that I saw her, and that it was her dress that was specially wet and that the beautiful lady of whom I told you comforted her till she smiled very happily.”

Thus Leela related her experience, and the mother kissed her, and two big tears fell on her beloved child's golden curls. Then she said, ‘But now, darling, you must go to sleep, otherwise my pet will not be able to play with Bruin to-morrow; he is very anxious to have a romp with her.’”

“ Good-night, mummie dear, give me an extra kiss, for I love you so much !”


Then little Leela fell fast asleep, and she woke the next morning with the feeling that she had been far away in a beautiful land where everything was shining, and where little children of all ages were enjoying life thoroughly.



DREAM SIX

A Visit to the Sea Shore

CHAPTER ONE.

HAT kind of a bird is that ?" Leela asked one afternoon when she was taking a walk with her mother. She saw a white bird with brown tips on its wings and a head with bright beady eyes. "It looks like a Sea-Gull, dearie," answered her mother, "though I cannot quite understand why it has flown so far inland; may be it has little ones and it wants to find some specially nice food for them."

"I should like to go to the sea," said Leela dreamily, closing her eyes. "Maybe the Sea-Gull would take you, if you asked her," answered the mother smilingly. Leela waved her hand at the Sea-Gull and it came down and sat near her and said gently, nodding its head:—"If you would like to come with me to the sea, just jump on my back and I will take you there. But you must hold on tightly to my feathers or you may fall."

The Sea-Gull looked so big and gentle, that Leela did not hesitate long but climbed on its back and off the Sea-Gull flew. How beautiful it looked all around her! the sky was so blue, the trees looked so green, and the mountains so high, and there in the distance she saw the blue sea.

"I wonder where the Sea-Gull will take me," thought Leela. "Oh, my little friend, I live near Mount Lavinia, and there I will put you down if you like," answered the Sea-Gull. "All right, thank you," said Leela. Gently the Sea-Gull put her down under the tall coconut palms. She was delighted with the sea and the fishing boats and the big fishing-nets, and the simple little huts of the fishermen, made of cadjans.

CHAPTER TWO.

LOOKING around, Leela saw a fisherman's little daughter going down to one of the boats, which was just being pulled in by the sturdy Sinhalese fishermen. "May I come with you?" Leela asked. "Certainly," answered the little Sinhalese girl, who looked very sweet in her lilac sari, just like the flowers which grew on the edge of the seashore.

"What is your name?" she asked. "My name is Leela and I have just come on a very short visit here. The Sea-Gull, my friend, brought me here on its back," answered Leela.

"My name is Indrawattie," said the little Sinhalese girl, "and I live here, a little higher up. Will you come with me to the village and take some food to a very poor woman who is ill and who has lost her husband lately?"

"Oh! yes I should love to," answered Leela eagerly and took Indrawattie's hand. She was a little bit taller than Leela. They walked up the hill together and came to a neat little house where Indrawattie's mother had just got some yams and *roti* ready for breakfast. She gave both the girls some food and then they trotted off with a little basket full of fish and eggs and some medicine.

"How far are you going?" asked Leela. "Not very far, little friend; do you see that very small hut there? that is the poor widow's house." They came near the hut and saw a pretty young Sinhalese woman sitting on a small stool before the door, holding a dear little brown baby on her lap. She looked very ill and sad. "How are you to-day?" asked Indrawattie, "and how is the baby?"

"Thanks, dear little Devi, baby has cut her first tooth now and I feel a little better, thanks to your good medicine." "I am so glad! and I have brought you some more medicine, some eggs and fish. I am sure you will soon be yourself again. If you

need any money I have plenty yet to give you. Just let me know, please."

"Oh, you dear little Devi," said the poor woman with tears in her eyes, "you have helped me so much; may you be blessed for all you are doing for me and my baby. Soon I shall be at work again and then I shall try to pay you back as much as I can."

"Oh no, I do not want you to pay me back; you know I am well off and I want to use my own money to do good. Now good-bye and cheer up."

The two little girls left the grateful woman and Leela asked, "Tell me, do you always help poor people?" "Of course I do," answered Indrawattie. "You know I am getting fifty rupees every year from a rich English lady, who lived here some years ago and with whose little girl I used to play every day. She was a very sickly child, and the mother said that I took such good care of her that she got well and strong. She sent me this beautiful amber necklace I am wearing, because she thought I looked like an Undine, a Fairy of the sea, who wears such necklaces. She sends me the money every year. I can use it as I like; I use most of it for the poor and the sick, because my father is strong and he can work. He does not want me to give it to him. So you see I am quite rich."

"How good you are," said Leela; "are all Sinhalese people just as good?" "I am afraid they are not all good, but many of us help the poor ones," answered Indrawattie seriously. "Oh, I love you very much, Indrawattie; would you also take care of me if I were ill, although I am not a rich girl and my mother could not give such a lot of money as that English lady does? I sometimes feel quite weak, and I think if I could play with you near the sea, I should get strong."

"Poor little Leela," answered Indrawattie, "Surely I could make you well also if you were ill. But I hope you will never be ill."

CHAPTER THREE.

LEELA looked gravely at her new little friend and said "I shall not forget you, and remember, I shall call on you when I need you. But now I must go home. It is getting dark, the sun is sinking and I have far to go," and she looked at the sun, which was almost dipping into the ocean. "How can I get home?" "I do not see the Sca-Gull."

"It has flown away to her young ones; I am afraid she has forgotten you altogether. Look, dearie! there is my carriage made of Oyster-shells. Come, come quickly, grey horses!" she called out, "we must take Leela home, it is getting dark." Four rats jumped out of a hole. They were quickly harnessed to the little Oyster-shell carriage. The two little girls jumped in and off ran the four grey rats as quickly as if they were racehorses.

Over hill and dale they raced and soon Leela saw the Eucalyptus-tree on the well-known hill and there was her mother sitting on the big stone-seat.

"Here I am back again, Mother dear!" called out Leela, jumping out of the little carriage. See, mummie, this is my new friend, Indrawattie, who has brought me back in her carriage."

Leela looked around, rubbing her eyes, but she could not see either her friend or the little carriage with the four fleet grey rats. What a pity! Leela wanted her mother to see it all so much.

"Little one," said her mother gently, "we must go home now; the sun is almost down and you have slept for half an hour."

"Oh no, mummie dear, I have been down to the sea-side. It was so beautiful there and Indrawattie was so kind." "Yes, darling, it is very beautiful at the sea now and we shall soon be going to Negombo or Mount Lavinia, so that you may play on the sea beach, and that is so healthy."

"That will be nice, darling mummie, but I would prefer Mount Lavinia. There I can play with Indrawattie and help her to take care of the poor, and the sick. Could you also give me a little money for my own, so that I could do what the good Indrawattie does?"

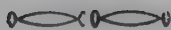
"Oh, you little dreamer, I do not know who Indrawattie is; you must tell me all about her when we are at home. For now we must hurry back and you must be wanting your milk and pudding."

"I am not hungry, mummie; I have had some goat's milk and *roti* with Indrawattie."

"I hope my little daughter will have some cow's milk, and egg-custard and then go to bed and sleep sweetly after the long day's play and talk."

Mrs. Leonard thought her little pet looked frail and she became rather anxious about her.

But Leela trotted home quite contentedly, telling her mother what she had done when she was on her visit to the seashore in the afternoon.



LEELA'S ILLNESS.

Leela's Illness.

CHAPTER ONE.



HE next morning Mrs. Leonard found her little daughter somewhat hot and feverish. Her eyes looked too bright and she did not feel inclined to get up, which was rather unusual for her.

"What is the matter with my little darling?" asked the mother anxiously. "Oh mother! I think I feel tired and sleepy to-day; my trip to the sea yesterday was a little too much for me." "You must have some *conjee* and coriander-tea to-day, little one and stay in bed. Then you will be all right to-morrow, I hope."

"Very well, mother, but please let Somie bring me a few flowers to look at, when I am awake. I think they will talk to me, when you are not with me. I know you are too busy, and Somie talks too much. Please do not let her remain with me. I want to sleep." Mrs. Leonard was quite uneasy, but she left her for a while and then she sent Somie in with some flowers, which were put in a vase on a little table near Leela's bed. Leela had closed her eyes and she was soon asleep, but the flowers in the vase near her bed seemed to be wide awake. Just listen to what they were saying.

"Leela dear!" said a Daisy-Devi, slipping out of the daisy flower which Somie had brought from the garden. "Princess Daisy sends her love to you. She lives with her two dear daisy babies in a new palace, a little further away, near Nuwara Eliya. She has not forgotten you and she hopes that you will come up there some day. It is very beautiful where she lives. The palace is surrounded by a lovely garden and many flower-Devis attend to her and her family. On full-moon nights they have fairy dances, and the Devis dance on the moonbeams. It is such a lovely sight that even the dear old moon smiles her broad good-natured smile on them."

"Yes, I must see that," whispered little Leela. "I do want to see Princess Daisy and her daisy babies." "You must also come and visit the Tea-flower-Devi family," said a white Lily-Devi who looked lovely in her long white gown and her golden curls.

"You know, I am the Star-flower's cousin. Her sister, who attended so carefully to the Tea-flower-Deva's children, has just been married to him and she lives in the best tea-bush of the whole plantation. Her home is decorated with the finest wreaths of golden-tip tea leaves and the walls are painted with the tea flower pollen. You should just see what a sweet bower it is. They all talk a great deal about you and call you their Queen."

"Yes, I love them all," answered Leela "and I am quite willing to be their Flower-Queen. But you have not brought me a crown yet. How can I be your Queen if I have no crown?"

"Oh, dear Princess Leela, just wait till to-night!" spoke a stately Canna-flower-Deva with a scarlet coat and a yellow silk waistcoat. "I will bring you your crown to-night and set it on your golden curls. I am a king myself and you shall be my Queen."

"All right," whispered Leela; "I shall be quite ready to become your Queen. But I want to have just as pretty a palace as Princess Daisy has."

"Oh, you will open your eyes wide, when you see your palace," said the gorgeous Canna-flower-Deva, "Just look at me! Our palace is even more splendid than my clothes."

Just then Leela's mother entered the room and the Flower-Devis returned quickly to their flowers and were very quiet, as if nothing had happened.

CHAPTER TWO.

MRS. Leonard looked at her sleeping child whose cheeks were so flushed but whose face was radiant, and the mother wondered in what fairy-land she was living just then.

"My little darling is in fairy-land again," said Mrs. Leonard softly. "I do hope she will not want to go there altogether. She is such a finely-organized child that she hardly fits into our matter-of fact-world. Bless her dear little heart!"

Then Leela opened her eyes, looked at the flowers in the vase near her and nodded at them, and then seeing her mother's anxious face, she put her dear little arms round her neck and whispered, "Mummie dear, you must come to my coronation to-night. The Canna-flower-Deva will be the king and I shall be the Eucharis-Lily Fairy Queen. All the flowers are coming to my coronation ceremony. But you must come also, mummie, as you are the best and sweetest mummie in the whole world."

"Of course I will come, darling," answered the anxious mother wisely, for she feared that her little daughter was delirious with fever.

"But now, my little one, you must take the coriander-tea and then try to sleep again."

She sat down at the bedside of her little daughter and hummed the tune of the song, "The Daisies in the Valley," which Leela loved, and the little girl again fell asleep and slept soundly.

The flower-Devis remained in their flowers (they did not dare show themselves, as Mrs. Leonard was in the room) so Leela slept a dreamless sleep which helped her to get over the fever. When she awoke she felt very much better and her fever was almost gone. So Mrs. Leonard began talking to her very quietly; she said:

"Uncle Harry has invited us all to come with him to England. He thinks that John and George ought to be educated in England now, as they are too old to remain any longer in Ceylon. They must

have a good English education. Uncle also thinks that it would be good for you and Somie and for me to spend some time there. Would you not like to see England and your little cousins there ?”

“Well, mummie dear,” answered the wise little girl, “if you will just let me have my Flower Coronation first, and if you will let me take my flower-king with me, we might build a flower palace in our garden in England for the summer, and live in a house in the winter ; for you said it was cold in winter there, I will talk with my flowers to-night, and let you know what they have to say.”

Mrs. Leonard did not want to excite her little daughter about the trip to England, so she took up her needle-work again and did not talk any more, and the little girl fell asleep again.

In the evening little Leela seemed very much better. She took her *conjee* very obediently and when her mother said good-night she was almost without fever.

“I shall sleep here with you to-night, dearie,” said Mrs. Leonard, “and when you want me, just call me, and I shall come at once.”

“Oh, my darling mother, you will be at my Coronation Festival to-night ! I am so happy,” smiled Leela, and turned her head contentedly towards the window, which had been left open. Then she closed her eyes, which were always ready to look into Fairy-land.



DREAM SEVEN

The Coronation.

LEELA'S LAST DREAM IN CEYLON.

CHAPTER ONE.



RS. Leonard being a very delicately-built lady and fully in sympathy with her dear little daughter took part in Leela's dream that night, and I will tell you what she saw:

When Mrs. Leonard lay down on the couch in the nursery she noticed that Leela was fast asleep and breathing very regularly, and that her dear little face was all smiles. She was very grateful that the threatened fever had passed away and she hoped that the intended visit to England would strengthen the delicate body of her most precious daughter. Mrs. Leonard herself was soon asleep and her experiences that night were never forgotten.

"Princess Lily, are you ready?" Mrs. Leonard heard some tiny voices saying outside the open window; "the carriage is waiting, may we come in?"

"Yes, my little friends, come in and dress me," answered Leela, sitting up in bed.

Four little Lily-Devis flew through the window, carrying in their hands a pure white gossamer sari sprinkled with gold-dust, and a veil made of the finest cobweb lace studded with dew-drop diamonds. They dressed Leela, who was now a tiny fairy like one of themselves and she looked radiantly happy. They dropped the veil over her golden curls and then they called out, "Bring in the carriage! our young Queen is ready."

A darling little carriage made out of a single crystal, lined with gold cloth and drawn by six chameleons, with a Brownie on the front seat as coachman, came in. As outrider scampered Bright-eye wearing his golden crown; four Lily-Devis lifted their little Queen into the carriage; two stood on the steps, one on either side, and two others waited on her as her attendants, standing behind her and holding over her head a royal umbrella made of an arum lily, with a golden handle. Thus Leela was carried away into the moonlit garden.

Off sped the six fleet chameleons, with the outrider always a few steps ahead. They ran to the hill where the dear old Eucalyptus-tree threw a majestic shadow over its surroundings. At the foot of the hill the carriage stopped and Leela saw a crowd of little Devis of all kinds surrounding a small golden palanquin; she was lifted out of the carriage and gently placed among the scarlet cushions of the golden palanquin. In procession she was carried up the hill.

But surely this was not the same place where Leela had dreamt so many sweet dreams! It looked so beautiful, just like fairy-land itself.

A little throne made of crystal and jewels stood at the place where she had rested so often under the tree. The whole tree was lighted up with hundreds of fairy lamps of all colours. On the throne in the air, she saw a number of fire-flies flitting about, and when she looked attentively at them, she saw that they were writing in the air her name, "Queen Lily," with their golden lights. She could not help clapping her hands with delight although she was a Flower Queen.

The Canna-Deva, as king, dressed in red silk with gold ornaments, a ruby crown on his head, and a golden sceptre in his hand, stood at the foot of the throne. He lifted Leela out of the palanquin and led her up the steps of the throne. When both were seated, Bright-eye, carrying a tiny diadem made of gold and dew-drop diamonds on a cushion of gold-cloth, bent down before the throne. The Canna-flower King took up the crown and placed it on Leela's head, while a chorus of a thousand Devis was heard singing a Flower Coronation Song

They Sang :—

We crown our Leela queen,
Friend of birds and flowers,
Our gentlest of companions
All the glad night-hours.

Chorus :— With gayest blossoms greet
And crown our Leela sweet ;
A lovely Devi now,
At her feet we bow

With us you're always gladdest,
And all your earth-life days
Sweeten with your pleasure
Our joyous woodland ways.

Chorus :— Crown our Leela dear !
Devas, gather near !
Joy on Joy to-day !
Join us, every fairy.

Never would you harm us
Ev'n in thoughtless play !
Sweet friend of every creature,
Joy ! joy ! be yours for aye !

Chorus :— With gayest blossoms greet ...

And the birds twittered it, and the beetles hummed it, and the small animals furnished the bass to it, while the little bear was the band-master.

CHAPTER TWO.

THEN thousands of Flower-Devis dressed in their colours came from everywhere, bent low before Queen Lily and greeted her as their Queen. Then they placed themselves in rows at each side of the throne.

Now out of the bushes came Brownies and squirrels and chameleons and birds and butterflies and jewel-beetles, all bending low while passing before the throne in procession; and just look! there also came Bruin, our dear little bear, dressed in a brown velvet coat with a broad golden band, and a long staff in his right front paw. He made such a comical bow before the King and Queen that everybody laughed (King and Queen of course first, as is the custom) Then Bruin, on his hind legs, as straight as possible, pulled out of his coat pocket a tiny ola-leaf and read an address of congratulation to the new Queen, and greetings from her subjects. Then he waved his staff and all the birds, beetles, Brownies and Devis called out in chorus, "Hail to our beloved Queen, the protectress of all small animals and flowers!" This ended the first part of the Coronation Ceremony.

Now came the Coronation feast. Brownies dressed in brown velvet coats, with jewels glittering in their peaked caps, handed to the Queen and the King, in dishes made of gold and topaz, blue-bell honey and pink pomegranate custard, and in crystal goblets sparkling champagne made of sugar-cane. The Canna-King drank to the health of his lovely Queen, and the sweet little Queen, with a radiant smile on her face, sipped from her crystal cup and nodded happily.

When all the Coronation guests had had their refreshments (they were served by hundreds of Brownies) the Master of Ceremonies, our little Bruin, announced that the King of Flowerland had arranged in honour of Young Queen Lily, a fairy dance; and that all were requested to adjourn to the moonlit tea-garden where all preparations had been completed. In procession, the

King and Queen leading in the Royal palanquin, the whole party arrived at the gardens. The Royal pair took their seats on a throne carved out of a single ruby and used a canopy made of spun glass. All these decorations were made by the Brownies, who loved Leela, because she had been so kind to all small beings.

Now the ball began. The Flower-Devis, all dressed according to their colours, in white, rose-red, light blue, dark blue, yellow and orange, had formed themselves into seven rows, each of one colour, and now they climbed on seven moonbeams, which dear old smiling full-moon had sent down to fairyland that full-moon night. And there they danced, on the white shining moonbeams, waving their veils of cobweb lace. The grace with which they danced can hardly be described. When the moonbeams began to fade, they all formed a wheel in colours and whirled around like a cloud of many colours, lighted up by the brilliant full moon. Above them flitted the jewel-beetles and the fire-flies, and higher still the birds twittered in rhythm a warble of praise of the fairy dancers and their Queen.

The Brownies, chameleons and squirrels danced on the ground and in the midst of them capered Bruin. This was the picture that Queen Lily had before her and she never forgot it. After the dance was over the Flower-Devis formed themselves into one ray of all the different colours and accompanied the King and Queen, who were again carried in their palanquins by the Brownies in procession to their flower palace, which was illuminated with fairy lamps of all colours. The palace was built by the Brownies in crystal and gold, with a roof of sweet smelling flowers. The young Queen, although radiantly happy, was too tired to admire it all. She let her attendants undress her and put her in her royal bed, which was a tiny arum-lily flower. The lily maids formed a circle round her bed and chanted a sweet low song, and very happily she fell asleep, after her Coronation festival as Queen of the Flower-Devis.

CHAPTER THREE.

LEELA woke very late the next morning. She stretched herself comfortably in her little white bed and rubbed her eyes. Where was she? Was she in the royal bed in her dream palace? or was she in her own little bed in Rose Cottage? She opened her eyes and she saw the vase with the flowers on the table near her bed! So it was all a dream! She was not "Queen Lily" the Queen of flowers, but she was Leela, the pet of her mother!

Well, that was all right. But she was wondering and wondering—for she could see it all again when she closed her eyes. Yes! there was the King and there was she herself sitting on the crystal throne, and there were the Flower-Devis and the birds and animals and insects all hailing her as the Flower Queen! and there was Bruin reading the address! How very beautiful it all was!

"Leela! Darling! do you feel better this beautiful morning?" said Mrs. Leonard's sweet voice.

"Mummie," said little Leela thoughtfully, "I think I feel all right, but it was so beautiful last night that I am thinking and thinking that the flower world is so much more beautiful than the waking-up world that I would rather like to remain "Queen Lily of the Flowers altogether." "But, my pet," answered the mother quite anxiously, "do you not love mummie and Somie, and your brothers and uncle Harry more than the Flower-Devis?"

"Mummie," said Leela, very seriously, "you know I love you all, very very much, especially you, Mummie, but in my dreams it is all so very different! I feel so light and free and every thing is so pretty, and nice and dainty. Here Somie talks so much and makes fun of me and the big brothers tease my squirrels and try to catch them and I am sometimes very much afraid that they will hurt my flowers. Could I then, not be a Flower-Devi at least every night and a little girl every day?"

"My own little pet," answered Mrs. Leonard, folding her little girl in her arms, "I want you to be my own little Leela, for a long, long time, and if you will tell me always what you are dreaming, I will let you be a Flower-Devi sometimes. Will that do?" Leela nodded thoughtfully and seemed content. And so it came about that her mother took part in Leela's dream-life and wrote down its events for the joy of other little girls who do not have such lovely dreams.

Our little dreamer had to remain in bed for the whole day, but she did not mind it, as her thoughts were with her flowers, and in her fitful slumbers she sometimes caught a glimpse of her fairyland.



Good-Bye

CHAPTER ONE.

NEXT morning Leela felt well enough to get up and sit in front of Rose Cottage on her little rattan chair, with her little Bruin lying at her feet. She told him that he was a good little bear, and that he had read very nicely the "Welcome" address to her as Flower Queen. Bruin winked with his cunning black eyes, stood up on his hind legs and danced a comical little dance before her, almost like the dance he had performed in her dream. Leela clapped her hands in delight and called out to her mother:

"Just look, Mummie! do you remember how Bruin looked in my dream? Is he not just like it now?"

Mrs. Leonard nodded thoughtfully and inwardly wondered, as she realised that her little daughter lived almost in two different worlds at the same time. Leela was quite well again in another few days and her mother contemplated their return to Colombo, in order to make preparations for their intended visit to England. It was now April and Mrs. Leonard thought that it would be the best time for travelling, so that they would reach England in May. They would get away before the South-West Monsoon should set in and make the sea very rough and travelling unpleasant. When they reached England it would be Spring-time and Summer would be before them, so that her little daughter would get used to the climate before the cold Winter should begin.

So Mrs. Leonard told her daughters that they would go to Colombo next day, and Leela said quickly, "Then I must say Good-bye to-night to my dear flowers and birds and butterflies; I could not go away without seeing them once more, Mummie!" "All right, dearie," smiled Mrs. Leonard, "then I will go with you and ask them to pay us a visit in England." Leela went to bed very early that night, for, she said, she must have a long talk with her flowers. And really it was a long procession of flowers,

birds, insects and animals that appeared before Queen Lily that night, bidding her good-bye and good-cheer, and promising to send messages by the swallows and Sea-Gulls to England to their relatives there, asking them to receive Queen Lily when she arrived. Even Dame Bluebell in her bell-shaped dress and bell-cap smiled (only imagine her smile!) and said :—

“ I have very many relatives in England and I am sending a message to them by Mr. Bruin to tell them that you are coming and that they must give you a royal reception.”

Then Princess Daisy came forward with a pretty daisy baby in each of her hands and said: “ My little daughters wish to say good-bye to you, Queen Lily. They heard you were at my wedding and they want so much to see you.”

There, too, the Admiral stood before her, made a deep bow and said, “ I come to you as a butterfly to tell you that I shall see you in England. My ship will be there in July and we can have just as good a time there as here in Ceylon.” Bushy-Tail and her children, Bright-eye the chameleon, the fire-flies and the Sea-Gull and all her friends came that night. I cannot remember all. But at last came Devi Sea-Grass (Indrawattie), whom Leela had visited at Mt. Lavinia. She looked rather sad and began to cry. “ Queen Lily,” she said, “ I wonder whether you could not take me with you ? ”

“ You know I have a very good friend in England, and then I love you so much! I shall have my flower put into a little basket with some sea-sand in it. I am very strong, you know, and I think I shall not die on the sea from sea-sickness. Please, Queen Lily, take me with you ! ”

“ Mummie, may I take her ? ” whispered Leela. “ Yes, dear, you may,” answered the mother.

“ I expect you at Colombo, Indrawattie,” said the little Queen graciously. “ Come to the Grand Oriental Hotel, where we shall be found before we go to the Steamer ! ”

CHAPTER TWO.

THE last visitor was the Canna-King. He came accompanied by a long train of Canna-Devas. He looked very sad.

He made a deep bow before the little Queen, and said: "I am in great distress! I cannot accompany you on your journey, for the cold climate of England does not agree with me. I could live only in a hot house, and besides, my subjects protest against my leaving them." All his Canna-flowers nodded their heads solemnly. "I shall wait faithfully for your return and it will be the happiest day in my flower-life when I greet my sweet Queen again on her return to me and her devoted subjects. As a parting gift I now put around your sweet neck a necklace of gold and red beads which will remind you of the colours in which I am dressed. And so, farewell, my beloved! come back to us soon!" All bent low and called out, "Hail to our Queen, the beloved of the Fairy World!" The little Queen stood up, raised her hands to all, and with tears in her eyes cried, "I thank you all, I shall never forget you and I shall return to my King and my friends after a little while. Farewell to all of you!"

Leela awoke next morning with tears in her eyes, but she wiped them quickly away and said to her mother:

"Really, mother, it is a little hard to leave them all, but still, they have relatives in England, and I am sure the Sea-Gulls and swallows will take their messages to them to receive me and then, Mummie, we are coming back, are we not?"

"Yes darling! we will come back; I also love Ceylon best!"

"You dear, sweet Mummie,! You are the best of all," cried Leela and she kissed her mother.

Conclusion.

NOW we too must say good-bye to our little dreamer. We also hope to see her back in Ceylon later on. Maybe she will tell us, herself, some of her dreams when she is grown-up.

One thing more I must tell you before we part from Leela for the time being ; and that is, that just before leaving the Jetty in Colombo for the steamer which was to carry them to England, a small covered basket was handed to Leela by a Sinhalese boy. He said that his sister from Mount Lavinia had asked him to give it to her little English friend Leela.

Leela peeped into it and she saw in a bed of moist sea-sand a plant of the same kind which she had seen at Mount Lavinia, when she was taken there on the Sea-Gull's back. There was one lilac flower on the plant and when she looked closely, she saw peeping out of it the dear little face of her friend Indrawattie.

"Here I am, as I promised," a tiny voice whispered, "and I am sure I shall stand the voyage very well ! And when you reach England please give me some water every day, and plant me near the seashore. Look at me sometimes during the voyage!"

Leela nodded happily and said to her mother, "See Mummie, she has really come ! how happy I am." Leela carried the basket to the steamer herself. She attended to her flower carefully and I am glad to say that she reached England with her little flower friend safely.

